

## PENSIONS TO SOLDIERS OF THE WAR OF 1812.

[To accompany Bill H. R. No. 801.]

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JUNE 22, 1860.

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Mr. BRABSON, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, made the following

### REPORT.

*The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred House bill No. 801, granting pensions to the officers, non-commissioned officers, musicians and privates, and marines who served in the war of 1812, &c., have had the same under consideration and report said bill back to the House, with the recommendation that it do pass.*

Your committee deem it due to the House to state the calculations they have made as to the probable additional charges which the passage of this bill would impose on the treasury, together with some of the reasons which induced them to report the same.

Your committee have found it impracticable to ascertain the true number, or terms of service, of the forces engaged in the Indian wars or in the regular service during the war of 1812, but have adopted, as the basis of their calculations, the approximate number furnished by the Commissioner of Pensions in his letter of 27th January, 1859.

The whole number who served, according to his estimate, for twelve months, was sixty-three thousand one hundred and seventy-nine, (63,179.) The number who served six months and less than twelve was sixty-six thousand three hundred and twenty-five, (66,325.) The number who served less than six months, but as long as ninety days, was one hundred and twenty-five thousand six hundred and forty-three, (125,643.)

The bill reported to the House provides that those who served twelve months shall have a pension of ninety-six dollars per annum; those who served six months and less than twelve, seventy-five dollars per annum; those who served ninety days and less than six months, fifty dollars per annum.

The average age of the soldiers of the war of 1812 could not have been less than twenty-five, which would make the average age of the survivors seventy-three; and from an examination of the most approved tables of mortality, and the probabilities and expectations of life, there would be living, in 1860, about one-eighth of the whole number.

From these data your committee come to the conclusion that there are now living seven thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven soldiers who would be entitled to a pension of ninety-six dollars per annum; eight thousand two hundred and ninety who would be entitled to a pension of seventy-five dollars per annum; fifteen thousand seven hundred and five who would be entitled to a pension of fifty dollars per annum.

Upon the same basis of calculation there would be two thousand three hundred and three widows entitled to a pension of ninety-six dollars per annum; twenty-four hundred and eighteen widows entitled to a pension of seventy-five dollars per annum; four thousand five hundred and eighty entitled to a pension of fifty dollars per annum.

But it will be remembered that the number of pensioners under existing laws, other than revolutionary, Florida, and Mexican war pensioners, should be deducted from the estimated number in this report.

By reference to the report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1st session, 36th Congress, pages 101 and 102, it will be found that there are now eleven thousand five hundred and eighty-five (11,585) pensioners. One hundred and sixty-five (165) of this number are revolutionary petitioners, and about three thousand are soldiers who served in the Florida and Mexican wars, leaving eight thousand four hundred and twenty pensioners who are provided for by existing laws, in the and included numerical force of the war of 1812.

The number of survivors of the war of 1812 and widows of deceased soldiers, according to the estimates of your committee, is forty-one thousand one hundred and ninety-three, and the amount which will be required for their payment is \$2,896,080.

Deduct the eight thousand four hundred and twenty who are provided for by existing laws from the forty-one thousand one hundred and ninety-three, and we have thirty-two thousand seven hundred and seventy-three.

Taking the average pay of existing pensioners, and the 8,420 are receiving (\$757,800) seven hundred and fifty-seven thousand eight hundred dollars, which should be deducted from the \$2,896 08, leaving two millions one hundred and thirty-eight thousand two hundred and eighty dollars to be provided for to meet the requirements of the bill reported by your committee.

The bill inaugurates no new policy.

The government established a pension system at a very early day for invalids, and from time to time extended its benefits to the men who, in the hour of peril, met the enemy and secured to us the blessings of constitutional liberty. When the men of the revolution reached three score years and ten they were placed on the pension roll for meritorious services.

The surviving soldiers of the war of 1812 have attained to the age of three score years and ten, and ask but simple justice at the hands of their government.

Many of the men who are provided for in this bill are suffering from wounds received, and diseases contracted, in the service of

their country, but who are deprived of the benefits of existing laws by the strict and technical rules of evidence adopted at the Pension Office.

Your committee by no means intend any reflection upon the courteous and competent gentleman who has charge of that department, but mention it as a fact, in aid of the bill, which is familiar to every member whose duty it has been to investigate the many applications daily made to Congress.

Your committee regard the pensions which the bill proposes to bestow as "nothing less than the long-deferred and inadequate wages of such services as no money could ever compensate."

Your committee cannot believe that the representatives of thirty millions of freemen will, in the struggle for power and place, forget the citizen soldier, who, in the hour of trial, left his home, family, and all the comforts of society to drive back the invaders of your soil. These men will, in a few years, have all passed away, and if any relief is to be granted this is the time to do it.

